

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 11 are amended. Claims 1-17, as amended, remain in the application with Claims 4, 8 and 13-17 withdrawn pending allowance of a generic claim. No new matter is added by the amendment to the claims.

The Rejections:

In the Office Action dated September 22, 2006, the Examiner rejected Claims 1-3, 5, and 7-W is/are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Steele U.S. Patent No. 3255807.

Regarding Claim 1, the Examiner stated that Steele discloses: an apparatus for guiding a door leaf 22 of a sliding door comprised of guide elements 50, 52; a movable belt 40 engaging the guide element 50, 52, the movable belt 40 having a portion adapted for contact with a guide surface 38 associated with the door leaf 22 whereby when the guide element 50, 52 is mounted to extend generally parallel to a plane of the guide surface 38, being the plane normal to the guide surface 38; and the portion of the movable belt 40 contacts the guide surface 38 during sliding of the door leaf 22 in a plane generally parallel to the plane of to the guide surface 38.

Regarding Claim 2, the Examiner stated that Steele further discloses the guide surface 38 is disposed in a region of a door frame 30 for the door leaf 22 and the guide element 50, 52 is attached to the door leaf 22.

Regarding Claim 3, the Examiner stated that Steele further discloses the guide surface 38 is disposed in the door leaf 22 and the guide element 50, 52 is attached to a region of a door frame 30 for the door leaf 22.

Regarding Claim 5, the Examiner stated that Steele further discloses guide element 50, 52 is a roller rotatably attached to the door leaf 22.

Regarding Claim 6, the Examiner stated that Steele further discloses the guide element holds the movable belt 40 against the guide surface 38.

Regarding Claim 7, the Examiner stated that Steele further discloses movable belt 40 seals against the guide surface 38 to prevent air leakage between opposite sides of the door leaf 22.

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Regarding Claim 9, the Examiner stated that Steele further discloses movable belt 40 has resilient properties (rubber, column 2, line 55).

Regarding Claim 10, the Examiner stated that Steele further discloses movable belt 40 has a laminated structure. The inclusion of leaf spring 58 in the belt is construed as a laminated structure.

Regarding Claim 11, the Examiner stated that Steele discloses a sliding door although not a door used in an elevator installation per se, Steele has all the structure set forth in the claims and the intended use in the preamble adds no patentable weight to the claims. The Examiner also stated that Steele further discloses: a door used in an installation comprised of a door leaf; guide element 50, 52 extending generally parallel to a plane in which the door leaf 22 slides, being the plane normal in which the door leaf 22 slides; and a movable belt 40 engaging the guide element 50, 52 the movable belt having a portion adapted for contact with a guide surface 38 during sliding of the door leaf 22 relative to the guide surface 38, the guide surface 38 extending in a plane generally parallel to the plane in which the door leaf 22 slides.

Regarding Claim 12, the Examiner stated that Steele further discloses another guide element 50 extending generally parallel to the plane of a door leaf 22 and the movable belt 40 being an endless belt engaging another guide element 50.

The Examiner rejected Claims 1-3, 5, and 11 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Julian et al. U.S. Patent No. 3798705.

Regarding Claim 1, the Examiner stated that Julian et al. discloses: an apparatus for guiding a door leaf 10 of a sliding door comprised of guide elements 13, 14, 15, 16; a movable belt 17 engaging the guide element 13, 14, 15, 16, the movable belt 17 having a portion adapted for contact with a guide surface 20 associated with the door leaf 10 whereby when the guide element 13, 14, 15, 16 is mounted to extend generally parallel to a plane of the guide surface 20, being the plane normal to the guide surface 20; and the portion of the movable belt 17 contacts the guide surface 20 during sliding of the door leaf 10 in a plane generally parallel to the plane of the guide surface 20.

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Regarding Claim 2, the Examiner stated that Julian et al. further discloses the guide surface 20 is disposed in a region of a door frame 12 for the door leaf 10 and the guide element 13, 15 is attached to the door leaf 10.

Regarding Claim 3, the Examiner stated that Julian et al. further discloses the guide surface 20 is disposed in the door leaf 10 and the guide element 13, 14, 15, 16 is attached to a region of a door frame 12 for the door leaf 10.

Regarding Claim 5, the Examiner stated that Julian et al. further discloses guide element 13, 14, 15, 16 is a roller rotatably attached to the door leaf 10.

Regarding Claim 11, the Examiner stated that Julian et al. further discloses: a door 10 used in an elevator installation comprised of an elevator door leaf 10; guide element 13, 14, 15, 16 extending generally parallel to a plane in which the elevator door leaf 10 slides, being the plane normal in which the elevator door leaf slides; and a movable belt 17 engaging the guide element 13, 14, 15, 16, the movable belt 17 having a portion adapted for contact with a guide surface during sliding of the elevator door leaf 10 relative to the guide surface, the guide surface 20 extending in a plane generally parallel to the plane in which the elevator door leaf slides.

The Examiner rejected Claims 1-3, 5, 7, and 10 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Prete U.S. Patent No. 5273363.

Regarding Claim 1, the Examiner stated that Prete discloses: an apparatus for guiding a door leaf 12 of a sliding door comprised of guide elements 10; a movable belt 30 engaging the guide element 10, the movable belt 30 having a portion adapted for contact with a guide surface 14 associated with the door leaf 12 whereby when the guide element 10 is mounted to extend generally parallel to a plane of the guide surface, being the plane normal to the guide surface; and the portion of the movable belt 30 contacts the guide surface 14 during sliding of the door leaf 12 in a plane generally parallel to the plane of the guide surface 14.

Regarding Claim 2, the Examiner stated that Prete further discloses the guide surface 14 is disposed in a region of a door frame, shown in Figure 1 for the door leaf 12 and the guide element 10 is attached to the door leaf 12.

Regarding Claim 3, the Examiner stated that Prete further discloses the guide surface 14 is disposed in the door leaf 12 and the guide element 10 is attached to a region of a door frame for the door leaf 12.

Regarding Claim 5, the Examiner stated that Prete further discloses guide element 10 is a roller rotatably attached to the door leaf 12.

Regarding Claim 7, the Examiner stated that Prete further discloses movable belt 30 seals against the guide surface 14 to prevent air leakage between opposite sides of the door leaf 12.

Regarding Claim 10, the Examiner stated that Prete further discloses movable belt 30 has a laminated structure (column 2, lines 15-31).

Applicant's Response:

In response to Applicant's previous argument that "the claims of record now define patentable subject matter over the art of record", the Examiner stated that Steele, Julian and Prete "disclose at least one guide element mounted to extend generally parallel to a plane, the plane being a plane normal to the guide surface of the references, of the guide surface, and the portion of the movable belt contacts the guide surface during sliding of the door leaf in a plane generally parallel to the plane, the plane being the plane parallel normal to the guide surface of the reference, of the guide surface."

In response to Applicant's argument that "all of the "guide elements" extend perpendicular to the planes in which the associated panels move and the contact surfaces of the "movable belts" also extend perpendicular to the planes in which the associated panels move", the Examiner stated that: "the associated panels motion does not define a plane. The guide elements also extend parallel to a plane in which the associated panels move, that plane being the plane parallel to the guide surface. Also the contact surface of the movable also extends parallel to a plane in which the associated panel moves, that plane also being the plane parallel to the guide surface."

Applicant amended Claim 1 to recite "a movable belt engaging said at least one guide element, said movable belt having a portion adapted for contact with a generally vertical guide surface associated with the door leaf whereby when said at least one guide element is mounted to extend generally parallel to a vertical plane of the guide surface, said portion of said movable belt

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contacts the guide surface during sliding of the door leaf in a vertical plane generally parallel to the plane of the guide surface."

Steele shows a horizontally extending threshold 38 contacting a portion of the track member 40, which track member 40 is in the form of a continuous loop engaging a pair of spaced end rollers 50 that also extend horizontally.

Julian shows an elongated band member 17 has opposite ends fixed to the leg portion 20 of the channel member 12 and wraps around the rollers 13, 14, 15, 16. The rollers 13 and 15 are rotatably mounted on the door 10 and extend horizontally.

Prete shows a pair of rollers 10 for a vertically extending window 12 slidably mounted on a track 14. Each roller 10 has a housing 18 with a shelf 24 extending horizontally between a pair of vertical walls 20, 22. A belt 30 encircles the shelf 24 for non-sliding engagement with the track.

As clearly seen in Figs. 1 and 3 of Steele, Fig. 1 of Julian, and Figs. 1 and 3 of Prete, all of the "guide elements" extend perpendicular (horizontally) to the planes in which the associated panels move and the contact surfaces of the "movable belts" also extend perpendicular (horizontally) to the planes in which the associated panels move. Applicant's guide surface and guide element extend generally vertical and, therefore, the cited patents do not anticipate nor render obvious Claims 1-3, 5 and 7-12.

Applicant amended Claim 11 to recite: "at least one elevator door leaf having an edge surface extending in a plane; at least one guide element extending generally perpendicular to the plane of said edge surface; and a movable belt engaging said at least one guide element, said movable belt having a portion adapted for contact with a guide surface during sliding of said at least one elevator door leaf relative to the guide surface, said guide surface extending in a plane generally perpendicular to the plane of said edge surface."

As clearly seen in Figs. 1 and 3 of Steele, Fig. 1 of Julian, and Figs. 1 and 3 of Prete, all of the "guide elements" extend parallel to the planes of the edges of the associated panels. Applicant's guide surface is generally perpendicular to the planes of the door edge surfaces and, therefore, the cited patents do not anticipate nor render obvious Claims 1-3, 5 and 7-12.

In view of the amendments to the claims and the above arguments, Applicant believes that the claims of record now define patentable subject matter over the art of record. Accordingly, an early Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

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